

DEFINITIONS

ACCOMMODATIONS

Changes in the administration of an assessment, such as setting, scheduling, timing, presentation format, response mode, or others, including any combination of these, that do not change the construct intended to be measured by the assessment or the meaning of the resulting scores. Accommodations are used for equity, not advantage, and serve to level the playing field. To be appropriate, assessment accommodations must be identified in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) and used regularly during instruction and classroom assessment.

ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is the minimum level of improvement that states, school districts and schools must achieve each year. It is an individual state's measure of yearly progress toward achieving state academic standards by NCLB.

AUTISM

Autism is a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age 3, that adversely affects a child's educational performance, often associated with engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines and unusual responses to sensory experiences.

CHARTER SCHOOLS

Charter schools are independent public schools designed and operated by educators, parents, community leaders, educational entrepreneurs and others. They are authorized/sponsored by designated local or state education organizations, who monitor their quality and effectiveness but allow them to operate outside of the traditional system of public schools.

CHILD WITH A DISABILITY

A child with a disability means a child evaluated in accordance with IDEA as having mental retardation, a hearing impairment including deafness, a speech or language impairment, a visual impairment including blindness, serious emotional disturbance, an orthopedic impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, an other health impairment, a specific learning disability, deaf-blindness, or multiple disabilities, and who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services.

DISAGGREGATED

"Disaggregate" means to separate a whole into its parts. Under NCLB, this term means that test results are sorted into groups of students who are economically disadvantaged, from racial and ethnic minority groups, have disabilities, or have limited English fluency.

FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION

Free appropriate public education (FAPE) means special education and related services that are provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without

charge; meet the standards of the state; include preschool, elementary school, or secondary school education and are provided in conformity with an individualized education program (IEP).

INCLUSION

Inclusion is a special education approach that stresses education students with disabilities, regardless of the type of severity of that disability, in the regular classrooms of their neighborhood schools.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM

An individualized education program (IEP) is a written statement for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed; and revised in a meeting in accordance with IDEA regulations.

INDIVIDUALIZED FAMILY SERVICE PLAN

The Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) is a written plan for providing early intervention services to infants and toddlers eligible under Part C of IDEA.

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is the major federal law related to special education that provides funding to states and sets specific procedural requirements for the identification and education of students with disabilities.

LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT

The IDEA requires that, to the maximum extent appropriate, school districts must educate students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment (LRE), i.e., in the regular classroom with appropriate aids and supports (referred to as "supplementary aids and services") along with their non-disabled peers in the school they would attend if not disabled, unless a student's individualized education program (IEP) requires some other arrangement.

LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY (LEA)

A local education agency (LEA) is a public institution (often referred to as a school district) that has administrative control and direction of one or more public elementary or secondary schools, and the term includes a public charter school that is within that LEA.

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATION PROGRESS

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAPE), conducted since 1969, is the only nationally representative and continuing assessment of what American students know and can do in various subject areas. Students with disabilities participate according to NAPE criteria. (For a copy of the criteria, see <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/about/criteria.asp>).

OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) is that section of the U.S. Department of Education that is responsible for the implementation of the IDEA. It carries out

activities related to state eligibility for IDEA funds and monitoring state compliance with IDEA requirements.

QUALIFIED PERSONNEL

Under IDEA, qualified personnel means personnel who have met SEA-approved or SEA-recognized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements that apply to the area in which the individuals are providing special education or related services.

RELATED SERVICES

Related services means transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education, and includes speech-language pathology and audiology services, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, identification and assessment of disabilities in children, counseling services, orientation and mobility services. The term also includes school health services, and social work services in schools.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special education means specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability, including instruction conducted in the classroom, in the home, in hospitals, in institutions and in other settings; related services; travel training; vocational education and instruction in physical education.

STATE EDUCATION AGENCY (SEA)

A state education agency (SEA) is the component of state government that is primarily responsible for the state supervision of public elementary and secondary schools.

TRANSITION SERVICES

For each student with a disability beginning at age 14 (or younger, if determined appropriate by the IEP team), and updated annually, the IEP must contain a statement of the transition service needs of the student that focuses on the student's courses of study and, beginning at age 16 (or younger, if determined appropriate by the IEP team), a statement of needed transition services for the student, including, if appropriate, a statement of the interagency responsibilities or any needed linkages. IDEA describes the components as services that promote movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation.